

Asian American Populations



Asian Americans are people having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.¹ According to the 2000 U.S. Census, those who identify only as Asian-American comprise 3.6 percent of the American population, approximately 10 million individuals. The Census Bureau projects that the Asian-American population will grow to 37.6 million individuals by the year 2050, comprising 9.3 percent of the population. Asian-American populations are generally concentrated in the western states, the Northeast, and parts of the South. The states with the greatest concentration of Asian Americans are Hawaii, California, Washington, New Jersey, and New York.²

Asian Americans represent a wide variety of languages, dialects, and cultures as different from one another as from non-Asian groups. Asian Americans have historically been overlooked due to the “myth of the model minority”: the erroneous notion that Asian Americans are passive, compliant, and without problems or needs. The effects of this myth have been the failure to take seriously the very real concerns of this population.

Asian Americans represent both extremes of socioeconomic and health indices: while more than a million Asian Americans live at or below the federal poverty level, Asian-American women have the highest life expectancy of any other group. Asian Americans suffer disproportionately from certain types of cancer, tuberculosis, and Hepatitis B. Factors contributing to poor health outcomes for Asian Americans include language and cultural barriers, stigma associated with certain conditions, and lack of health insurance.³

For more details about Asian-American populations, see [US Census 2000 Brief: The Asian Population](#).

Ten Leading Causes of death in the U.S. in 2002 for Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders:

1. [Cancer](#)
2. [Heart disease](#)
3. Stroke
4. Unintentional injuries
5. [Diabetes](#)
6. [Influenza and Pneumonia](#)
7. Chronic lower respiratory disease
8. Suicide
9. Nephritis, Nephrotic syndrome, and Nephrosis
10. Septicemia

Source: Health, U.S., 2004, [Table 31](#).

In addition, Asian Americans have disproportionately high prevalence of the following conditions and risk factors:

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases (COPD)
- Hepatitis B
- [HIV/AIDS](#)
- Tobacco smoke
- [Tuberculosis \(TB\)](#)

American Indian & Alaska Native (AI/AN) Populations



American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) are people having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.¹ According to the 2000 U.S. Census, those who identify only as AI/AN constitute 0.9 percent of the United States population, or approximately 2.5 million individuals. The Census Bureau projects modest growth by AI/AN communities in the next few decades, topping 5 million individuals by the year 2065 and comprising 1.1 percent of the population. The greatest concentrations of AI/AN populations are in the West, Southwest, and Midwest, especially in Alaska, Arizona, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.²

There are 569 federally recognized AI/AN tribes, plus an unknown number of tribes that are not federally recognized. Each tribe has its own culture, beliefs, and practices. AI/ANs have a unique relationship with the federal government due to historic conflict and subsequent treaties. Tribes exist as sovereign entities, but federally recognized tribes are entitled to health and educational services provided by the federal government. Though the Indian Health Service (IHS) is charged with serving the health needs of these populations, more than half of the AI/AN population does not permanently reside on a reservation,³ and therefore have limited or no access to IHS services. Geographic isolation, economic factors, and suspicion toward traditional spiritual beliefs are some of the reasons why health among AI/ANs is poorer than other groups. Other factors that contribute to poorer health outcomes for AI/ANs include cultural barriers, geographic isolation, inadequate sewage disposal, and economic factors.⁴

(Eight Native American tribes are recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia. These include the Chickahominy, the Eastern Chickahominy, the Mattaponi, the Upper Mattaponi, the Monacan, the Nansemond, the Pamunkey and the Rappahannock. These tribes are not recognized by the U.S. Government but are seeking a change in status.)

For more details about American Indian and Alaska Native populations:

[US Census 2000 Brief: The American Indian and Alaska Native Population](#)

[US Census Bureau American Indian and Alaska Native \(AIAN\) Data & Links](#)

[US Census Bureau American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States](#)

Ten Leading Causes of death in the U.S. in 2002 for American Indians and Alaska Natives:

1. [Heart disease](#)
2. [Cancer](#)
3. [Unintentional injuries](#)
4. [Diabetes](#)
5. Stroke
6. Chronic liver disease and Cirrhosis

7. Chronic lower respiratory disease
8. Suicide
9. [Influenza and Pneumonia](#)
10. Homicide

Source: Health, U.S., 2004, [Table 31](#).

In addition, American Indians and Alaska Natives have disproportionately high prevalence of the following conditions and risk factors:

- [Mental health](#)
- Obesity
- Substance abuse
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

Black or African American Populations



Blacks or African Americans are people having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.¹ According to the 2000 U.S. Census, those who identify only as African American constitute approximately 12 percent of the American population -- almost 35 million individuals. The Census Bureau projects that by the year 2035 there will be more than 50 million African American individuals in the United States, comprising 14.3 percent of the population. The African American population is represented throughout the country, with the greatest concentrations in the Southeast and mid-Atlantic regions, especially Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Maryland.²

African Americans have a long history in the United States. Some African American families have been in the United States for many generations; others are recent immigrants from places such as Africa, the Caribbean, or the West Indies. The health disparities between African Americans and other racial groups are striking and are apparent in life expectancy, infant mortality, and other measures of health status. For example, in 1999 the average American could expect to live 76.9 years, the average African American could only expect to live 71.4 years.³ Factors contributing to poor health outcomes among African Americans include discrimination, cultural barriers, and lack of access to health care.⁴

For more details about Black or African American populations:

[US Census 2000 Brief: The Black Population](#)

[US Census Bureau, African-American History Month, 50 Years of Change February 2004.](#)

Ten Leading Causes of death in the U.S. in 2002 for Blacks or African Americans:

1. [Heart disease](#)
2. [Cancer](#)
3. Stroke
4. [Diabetes](#)
5. Unintentional injuries
6. Homicide
7. [HIV/AIDS](#)
8. Chronic lower respiratory disease
9. Nephritis, Nephrotic syndrome, and Nephrosis

10. Septicemia

Source: Health, U.S., 2004, [Table 31](#).

In addition, Blacks or African Americans have disproportionately high prevalence of the following conditions and risk factors:

- Hypertension
- [Infant mortality](#)
- [Tuberculosis \(TB\)](#)

Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (NHOPI) Populations



Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPIs) are people having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands,¹ even if they do not live in the Pacific Islands. According to the 2000 Census, those who identify only as NHOPI comprise 0.1 percent of the American population, or almost 400,000 individuals. Until 2000, NHOPIs were grouped with Asian Americans in studies of race and ethnicity. For this reason, there are no population growth projections for NHOPIs at this time. NHOPIs live throughout the United States, but their populations are most concentrated in the western mainland states and Hawaii.²

Though historically grouped with Asian Americans for data collection, NHOPI was assigned as a distinct category for the 2000 Census. NHOPIs generally experience poorer health than the American population as a whole: they are more at risk for developing and dying from cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other diseases. Factors contributing to poor health outcomes among NHOPIs include cultural barriers, limited access to health care, and poor nutrition and lifestyle.³

For more details about Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander populations, see [US Census 2000 Brief: The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Population](#).

Ten Leading Causes of death in the U.S. in 2002 for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders:

1. [Cancer](#)
2. [Heart disease](#)
3. Stroke
4. Unintentional injuries
5. [Diabetes](#)
6. [Influenza and Pneumonia](#)
7. Chronic lower respiratory disease
8. Suicide
9. Nephritis, Nephrotic syndrome, and Nephrosis
10. Septicemia

Source: Health, U.S., 2004, [Table 31](#).

In addition, NHOPIs have disproportionately high prevalence of the following conditions and risk factors:

- Hepatitis B
- [HIV/AIDS](#)

- [Tuberculosis \(TB\)](#)

Hispanic or Latino Populations



Hispanics or Latinos are persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central-American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The federal government considers race and Hispanic origin to be two separate and distinct concepts; Hispanic Americans may be any race.¹ According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Hispanics of all races represent 13.3 percent of the U.S. population, about 37.4 million individuals.² The Census Bureau projects that by the year 2040 there will be 87.5 million Hispanic individuals, comprising 22.3 percent of the population.³ Though Hispanic communities can be found throughout Florida, the Northeast, and other parts of the country, the greatest concentrations of Hispanics are in the southwestern states from Texas to California. The states with the greatest concentration of Hispanics are New Mexico, California, Texas, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, and Florida.⁴

Though they share many aspects of a common heritage such as language and emphasis on extended family, Hispanic cultures vary significantly by country of origin. Hispanics tend to be younger than the white non-Hispanic population (except for Cubans, who have a higher proportion of elderly than other Hispanic groups). Their health profiles are also unique: Puerto Ricans suffer disproportionately from asthma, HIV/AIDS, and infant mortality,⁵ while Mexican Americans suffer disproportionately from diabetes.⁶ Factors that contribute to poor health outcomes among Hispanics include language and cultural barriers, lack of access to preventive care, and lack of health insurance.⁷

For more details about Hispanic/Latino populations, see the following:

[National Center for Health Statistics \(NCHS\): A Demographic & Health Snapshot of the U.S. Hispanic/Latino Population](#)

[US Census 2000 Brief: The Hispanic Population](#)

[US Census 2000 Brief: The Hispanic Population en Español](#)

[Hispanic/Latinos in the Delta Region](#)

presented August 27, 2003 to "Revisiting the Delta project: Healthy People in a Healthy Environment"

Ten Leading Causes of death in the U.S. in 2002 for Hispanics or Latinos:

1. [Heart disease](#)
2. [Cancer](#)
3. Unintentional injuries
4. Stroke
5. [Diabetes](#)
6. Chronic liver disease and Cirrhosis

7. Homicide
8. Chronic lower respiratory disease
9. [Pneumonia and Influenza](#)
10. [Birth defects](#)

Source: Health, U.S., 2004, [Table 31](#).

In addition, Hispanics or Latinos have disproportionately high prevalence of the following conditions and risk factors:

- Asthma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- [HIV/AIDS](#)
- Obesity
- Suicide
- Teenage pregnancy
- [Tuberculosis \(TB\)](#)

White Populations



Whites are people having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.¹ According to the 2000 U.S. Census, those who identify only as white comprise approximately 70 percent of the total U.S. population. The Census Bureau projects that by the year 2060, white Americans will comprise less than 50 percent of the total U.S. population. The greatest concentrations of this population are in the Midwest and Northeast, especially Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Iowa, North Dakota, West Virginia, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado.²

White Americans belong to a variety of ethnic groups with distinct languages, dialects, and cultures. Whites represent both extremes of socioeconomic and health status. Some white families have been in the United States for many generations; others are recent immigrants. The health status of white Americans is often used as the “baseline” against which other racial and ethnic groups are measured. However, whites experience many of the same health problems as other groups. Factors that contribute to poor health outcomes among whites include lack of access to health care and lack of health insurance.

For more details about white populations, see [US Census 2000 Brief: The White Population](#).

Ten Leading Causes of death in the U.S. in 2002 for white non-Hispanic Americans:

1. [Heart disease](#)
2. [Cancer](#)
3. Stroke
4. Chronic lower respiratory disease
5. Unintentional injuries
6. [Diabetes](#)
7. [Influenza and Pneumonia](#)
8. Alzheimer's disease
9. Nephritis, Nephrotic syndrome, and Nephrosis
10. Suicide

Source: Health, U.S., 2004, [Table 31](#).

In addition, whites have disproportionately high prevalence of the following conditions and risk factors:

- Hypertension
- Obesity